

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5653

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 11152

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM CHIANG MAI 13 JUNE 1975 SENT
BANGKOK ACTION IS REPEATED FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

QUOTE

CHIANG MAI 0143

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJECT: CHIANG MAI BY-ELECTION

1. FEW HERE HAVE PAID MUCH ATTENTION, BUT THEY'RE OFF AND
RUNNING AGAIN IN CHIANG MAI WITH EIGHT CANDIDATES ENTERED
FOR THE JUNE 29 BY-ELECTION. IT IS AGAIN A PERSONALITY
CONTEST ALTHOUGH ONE CANDIDATE CLAIMS TO REPRESENT THE
GOVERNMENT AND HAS THE BACKING OF THREE AMONG FOUR PARTIES
IN COALITION. ELECTION HAS PROMPTED FORMATION OF TWO NEW
PARTIES, BUT NO NEW IDEAS. ONLY THE SPT CANDIDATE HAS
ESPoused ANY SORT OF IDEOLOGY, AND HE ALONE HAS ATTACKED
U.S. PRESENCE. DURING LAST JANUARY'S ELECTION VOTER
TURNOUT IN CHIANG MAI'S DISTRICT ONE (WHICH INCLUDES
APATHETIC CITY RESIDENTS) WAS LOW AND IS EXPECTED TO BE
EVEN LOWER THIS GO AROUND. CANDIDATES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
2. CAPT. KANOK RATANAI (THAI NATION PARTY)--AT 58,

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KANOK, PREVIOUSLY LEADER OF THE PRACHA SANTI GROUP WITH

CAPTURED LAST DECEMBER'S MUNICIPAL ELECTION, WAS TOP MUNICIPAL VOTE-GETTER BUT PREFERRED NOT TO BE MAYOR. FROM A WELL-TO-DO FAMILY WHO OWNS THE CHANGPUAK MARKET AND TOBACCO CURING STATIONS IN CHIANG DAO, KANOK IS EXPECTED TO RECEIVE SUPPORT OF BUSINESSMEN, GOVT. OFFICIALS AND URBAN POPULATION. SAP AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTIES HAVE NOT ENTERED CANDIDATES BUT ARE BACKING KANOK WHO IS EXPECTED PICK UP SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF VOTES PREVIOUSLY CAST FOR UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES OF THOSE PARTIES IN JANUARY ELECTION. AS "GOVERNMENT" CANDIDATE, HE ALSO ATTEMPTING TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GOOD WILL BEING ENGENDERED BY 2500 MILLION BAHT TAMBON COUNCIL PROJECTS. DEPUTY P.M. PRAMAN DURING VISIT TO CM JUNE 6 AND 7 USED OPPORTUNITY TO BACK KANOK'S CANDIDACY, AND P.M. KHUKRIT IS EXPECTED TO MAKE APPEARANCE IN CM SOMETHIME BEFORE ELECTION DAY. KANOK'S CHANCES OF WINNING ARE GOOD.

3. NUMBER 2 IS 31-YEAR-OLD PRASOP LIMSIRICHAI OF FARMER'S PARTY WHO AS AGRICULTURE GRADUATE OF MAE JOH COLLEGE EXPECTS RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM AGRICULTURE GROUPS AND FARMERS. PRASOP HAS B.S. IN AGRIC ENGINEERING FROM ISRAEL WHERE HE SPENT TWO YEARS ON GOI GRANT. IN ORDER TO RUN, HE RECENTLY RESIGNED POSITION OF PRODUCTION MGR AT THAI FARMING (PROJECT BACKED BY ISRAELI EISENBERG GROUP), BUT CONTINUES AS MANAGER VARIOUS SMALL CONCERNS AND CLAIMS CONNECTIONS WITH INFLUENTIAL BUSINESSMEN. AS YOUNGEST CONTENDER, PRASOP ATTEMPTING ALSO APPEAL TO YOUTH AND AMONG THOSE RUNNING HAS LARGEST NUMBER OF LEAFLETS AND POSTERS ON DISPLAY.

4. LOET CHINAWAT (SOCIAL NATIONALIST)--AFTER COMING IN TENTH IN JANUARY BID AT ELECTION, LOET'S CHANCES ARE MINIMAL. MONEY BEING NO PROBLEM, HOWEVER (HE REPORTDLY SPENT MORE THAN ONE MILLION BAHT IN JANUARY), LOET HAS AGAIN AGREED TO ATTEMPT THE CAPTURE OF ONE MORE SEAT FOR SOCIAL NATIONALISTS.

5. BECAUSE THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY IS NOT FIELDING A CANDIDATE BUT HAS AGREED TO SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATS, NIKHOM DANRONGKITKASET, WHO RAN AS A SOCIAL AGRARIAN IN JANUARY, HAS ESTABLISHED HIS OWN AGRICULTURE FORCE PARTY. NIKHOM MISSED BEING ELECTED IN JANUARY BY ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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2000 VOTES AND FEELS THAT SUPPORT FROM FARMERS AND TOBACCO CURERS WILL PUT HIM IN FIRST PLACE. (NIKHOM IS RADIO ANNOUNCER FOR FARM NEWS.) POLITICAL PUNDITS HERE BELIEVE HIS CHANCES ARE GOOD.

6. DEMOCRAT CANDIDATE INSOM CHISAOWONG CAME IN FOURTH IN JANUARY ELECTION AND IS A POSSIBLE WINNER BECAUSE OF SOCIAL AGRARIAN SUPPORT. HE COUNTS ON RECEIVING AT LEAST SOME OF 22,554 VOTES PREVIOUSLY CAST FOR UNSUC-

CESSFUL SOC AG CANDIDATE MON-IND RINKAM WHO IS ASSISTING IN CAMPAIGN. ISOM, HOWEVER, LACKS SUPPORT AMONG BUSINESSMEN IN CITY AND IS HOPEFUL SENI WILL HELP SWAY URBAN VOTERS BY VISIT TO CM DURING CAMPAIGN.

7. BUNSANONG BUNYOTHAYAN (SOCIALIST PARTY OF THAILAND) -BORN IN CHIANG RAI, BUNSANONG AS SECY GENL OF SPT IS WELL KNOWN IN CHIANG MAI AND WAS THOUGHT TO HAVE A CHANCE DESPITE PREVIOUS DEFEAT IN BANGKOK LAST JANUARY. RECENT SEIZURE OF ARMS BEING DRIVEN TO CHIANG MAI IN BUNSANONG'S CAR MAY, HOWEVER, HURT HIS CAMPAIGN. (IT ALSO POSSIBLE PUBLICITY WILL HELP HIM.) BUNSANONG HAS LATELY BEEN CAMPAIGNING IN REMOTE VILLAGES AND HAS NOT YET SURFACED TO DEFEND HIS REPUTATION AGAINST GUN-RUNNING CHARGES. STUDENTS FROM BANGKOK ARE REPORTEDLY HELPING HIM IN VILLAGES, AND M.P. INSON BUAKIAO HAS PLAYED ACTIVE PART IN CAMPAIGN. BUNSANONG IS ONLY CANDIDATE THUS FAR TO ADDRESS INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AND CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL AMERICAN FORCES IN THAILAND.

8. CANDIDATE NUMBER 7 MANOP RATANARITIKUN IS MEMBER OF NEW SIAM PARTY WHICH WAS FORMED BY THREE MP'S PREVIOUSLY ASKED TO LEAVE SPT. MANOP'S CANDIDACY IS BELIEVED SOLELY FOR PURPOSE SPLITTING OFF SUPPORT FOR SPT'S BUNSANONG, AND MANOP IS NOT WELL-KNOWN IN CHIANG MAI.

9. FINAL CANDIDATE IS SARIT SUKHPRACHA WHO FILED CANDIDACY AT LAST MINUTE AND WAS TURNED DOWN FOR HAVING NO PARTY AFFILIATION. SARIT TOOK CASE TO COURT, HOWEVER, AND COURT RULED THAT HE COULD RUN. ON RETURN TRIP TO FILE CANDIDACY AT SALA KLANG, SARIT CAME ACROSS DEMONSTRATING SIILOR DRIVERS TO WHOM HE GAVE 2000 BAHT FOR THEIR SUPPORT. DRIVERS ACCEPTED MONEY AND PROMISED THEIR VOTES. ONLY LATER DID HE LEARN THAT DRIVERS DON'T EVEN LIVE IN DISTRICT ONE. WE DON'T GIVE SARIT MUCH CHANCE OF WINNING.

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UNQUOTE WHITEHOUSE

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